IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) The number of deaths reported due to Kala-azar during last 3 years are:—

Year	No. of Deaths
1993	710
1994	384
1995	277
1996	449 (upto Aug. 1996. provisional)

(b) and (c) No, Sir.

WHO Warning Against Dengue Outbreak

483. PROF. RAM KAPSE : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the World Health Organisation (WHO) had warned the Union Health Ministry and civil bodies in Delhi as early as September against an impending Dengue outbreak;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Regional Office WHO had issued detailed guidelines for prevention of Dengue fever and clinical management; and

(c) if so, what action was taken by Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) WHO's letter dated 9th September, 1996 to the Union Health Ministry only contained trend analysis of incidence of Dengue Fever/ Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever in different South East Asian countries including India. However, there was no specific warning for any part of India or Delhi. Government was advised to keep vigil in major hospitals and prepare for any emergency handling of the situation. Control Rooms were set up in the Directorate General of Health Services and Directorate of National Malaria Eradication Programme on 10.9.96 and 13.9.96 respectively and all hospitals were asked to monitor and report the cases and deaths to the authorities. The national Institute of Communicable Diseases also issued a Dengue Alert to all State Governments and reiterated the guidelines relating to surveillance and containment of Dengue which had been issued in August, 1995.

(b) and (c) The guidelines for precention of Dengue fever and clinical management from Regional Office, WHO were received on 4.10.96 and were circulated to all hospitals in Delhi on 7.10.96.

Interest Rates of Banks

484. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that banks are flush with funds but interest rates are high; and

(b) the steps Government propose to take to reduce interest rates to revive economy?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have reported that there has been improvement in the overall liquidity position in the financial system. The liquidity position of banks has improved mainly due to increase in deposits and reduction in the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) effected since November, 1995. The Prime Lending Rates (PLRs) of some banks which ruled 16.5 per cent from November 1995 to mid-July 1996 was brought down to 16.00 per cent under the impact, inter alia, of a sharp increase in lendable resources prompted by cuts in CRR. In September-October 1996, a few banks reduced the PLR to 15.0 per cent. RBI have further reported that in October 1996, following the announcement of the monetary policy for the second half of 1996-97, including further lowering of CRR in phases, the lendable resources of banks would be enhanced by about Rs.4275 crore for each percentage point reduction in CRR. In the light of the measures announced by RBI, banks by reducing their PLRs appropriately.